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DEPARTMENT FOR EUR/ACE (HODGKINSON), INL (CARROLL) AND DOJ/ICITAP  
(TREVILIAN, THOMAS, DUCOT) AND DOJ/OPDAT (ALEXANDRE, EHRENSTAMM,  
ACKER)

SENSITIVE

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: N/A  
TAGS: [ASCH](#) [PREL](#) [KCRM](#) [KJUS](#) [BU](#)  
SUBJECT: BULGARIA: EU MISSIONS PONDER ANTI-OC TRAINING CENTER

REF: A)SECSTATE 193421

B)SOFIA 01661

1. (SBU) SUMMARY: In reftel B, Post expressed its strong support for establishment of a South Eastern European Regional Organized Crime Training Center (SEEROCTC) at the Bulgarian Police Academy. Post has subsequently met with representatives from four Embassies -- UK, Netherlands, Spain and Germany -- and the European Commission Representation in Bulgaria, to brief them on the project and solicit support to improve Bulgaria's counter-organized crime performance. All reacted positively to SEROCTC, sharing post's view that the center can be a strong step toward a more effective and unified approach to fighting organized crime throughout South East Europe.  
END SUMMARY

2. (SBU) Thomas Peebles, OPDAT RLA, Ivan Abrams, ABA/CEELI Criminal Law Specialist, and Don Lizotte, USDOJ/ICITAP Senior Law Enforcement Advisor, presented the SEEROCTC concept to representatives of the five missions: a center at the Bulgarian Police Academy which will use a standardized curriculum of the world's best practices and a "train-the-trainers" approach to develop a self-sustaining group of regional anti-OC trainers. They requested that the representatives of the four Embassies and EC Delegation explore within their institutions the possibility of joining with the Government of Bulgaria (GOB) and possibly the United States, if we receive the funding, in providing initial support to help "jump start" the center.

3. (SBU) Post emphasized that the GOB is moving ahead with the project. It is providing the Police Academy facilities and intends to tap into EU funds to sustain the center. Thus, neither the United States and nor any other foreign donor will be asked to spend funds on "bricks and mortar." Rather, international contributors would have an opportunity to provide expertise and be involved in establishing the working structure of the center.

4. (SBU) The EU representatives gave positive responses and promised to pursue the possibility for support within their institutions. The First Secretary of the EC Commission, for example, labeled the project "ambitious and constructive," and said it deserved support because it would address key concerns of the EU included in its monitoring report of last November, which Bulgaria must address by the end of March. Representatives from the four Embassies expressed similarly positive opinions, though they naturally had many detailed questions they would raise with the Bulgarian authorities.

5. (SBU) COMMENT: The favorable opinions from representatives of the five missions suggest that post may be able to capitalize upon broad support for a self-sustaining institution dedicated to countering organized crime on a regional basis. Post anticipates feedback meetings in the next 30-45 days. Each of the missions

recognizes that overlapping institutions and proposals (SECI, TADOC)  
are out there and will need to sort through that, as well as the  
merits of SEEROCTC's specific case.    END COMMENT

KARAGIANNIS